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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-36. Please add the following new claims 37-46.

1-36 (Cancelled)

37. (New) A data card comprising:

a rectangular, non-magnetic substrate including opposed first and second sides;

a circular data storage region exposed at the first side of the substrate, wherein the data storage region includes a thin film layer of high density, high coercivity magnetic material that is overlaid by a protective layer, and the protective layer includes at least two layers, wherein one of said layers includes a magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material and another of said layers is a non-magnetic friction reducing layer formed over the magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material.

38. (New) The data unit of claim 37, wherein the data card further comprises a non-magnetic material layer positioned between the protective coating and said at least one magnetic material layer, said magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material being responsive through said non-magnetic layer to produce a magnetic image field.

39. (New) A data card comprising:

a rectangular, non-magnetic substrate including opposed first and second sides;

a circular data storage region exposed at the first side of the substrate, wherein the data storage region includes a thin film layer of high density, high coercivity magnetic material

that is overlaid by a bendable, abradeable protective layer, and the protective layer includes includes a magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material.

40. (New) The data unit of claim 39, wherein said protective coating comprises at least two layers, with a first one of the layers being formed of the magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material and a second of the layers being a non-magnetic friction reducing layer formed over the magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material.

41. (New) The data unit of claim 40, wherein the data card further comprises a non-magnetic material layer positioned between the protective coating and said at least one magnetic material layer, said magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material being responsive through said non-magnetic layer to produce a magnetic image field.

42. (New) The data unit of claim 39, wherein the data card further comprises a non-magnetic material layer positioned between the protective coating and said at least one magnetic material layer, said magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material being responsive through said non-magnetic layer to produce a magnetic image field.

43. (New) A method for reading a data card with a data processing station, the method comprising:

providing a data card including a rectangular, non-magnetic substrate including opposed first and second surfaces, and circular data storage region on one of the first and second surfaces, the data storage region includes a thin film layer of high density, high coercivity magnetic material that is overlaid

by a bendable, abradeable protective layer that includes a magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material;

providing a data processing station including at least one transducer capable of communicating signals with the data storage region; and

rotating the data card within the data processing station while communicating signals between the at least one transducer and the data storage region.

44. (New) The data unit of claim 43, wherein the data storage region further comprises a non-magnetic material layer positioned between the protective coating and said at least one magnetic material layer, said magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material being responsive through said non-magnetic layer to produce a magnetic image field.

45. (New) A method for reading a data card with a data processing station, the method comprising:

providing a data card including a rectangular, non-magnetic substrate including opposed first and second sides, and a circular data region at the first side of the substrate, wherein the data region includes a thin film layer of high density, high coercivity magnetic material that is overlaid by a bendable, abradeable protective layer that includes a magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material;

providing a data processing station including at least one transducer capable of communicating signals with the data storage region; and

rotating the data card within the data processing station while communicating signals between the at least one transducer and the data storage region.

*Amended*

46. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the data card further comprises a non-magnetic material layer positioned between the protective coating and said at least one magnetic material layer, said magnetically permeable, magnetically saturable material being responsive through said non-magnetic layer to produce a magnetic image field.

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